



Idling of the youth without jobs and its implications in the Wa municipality of the upper west region of Ghana

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Abstract

Youth unemployment is one of the biting problems bedevilling many countries including Ghana and majority of the youth around the world are actively searching for jobs without any success ILO (2012). Wa Municipality and according to Ghana Statistical Service (2012)) about eighty percent of the unemployed youth find themselves in prison for misdemeanours. The paper examines the reasons and implications of youth idling without jobs in the Wa Municipality. A cross-sectional design was used with some descriptive data and triangulated with qualitative data. Sampling was purposive and in many cases simple random sampling was used. An interview guide and questionnaires were also used for data and analysed concurrently. The study showed that youth impatience, corruption, low level of education, refusal of employers to pay employees what is due them, financial constraints were reasons why youth idle in the Wa municipality. Also, motorbike thefts, livestock stealing and electrical appliances are the most predominant repercussions of youth idling without jobs in the municipality. It is therefore obvious that eighty five percent of all crime perpetrators are committed by those youth who idle without jobs for which many find themselves imprisoned in Wa Municipality. Developing a conscious economic policy by the government to rekindle growth in the private sector so as to provide more job opportunities for the youth as well as integration of entrepreneurial skills into the school curriculum by the government would help minimise this menace.

Keywords: Unemployment; Youth, Jobs; Development; Crime

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1. Introduction

A report by the International Labour Organisation (2012) affirms that majority of skilled and unskilled youth in the world are actively searching for jobs without any success and 60% of these youth channelled their energies into non-productive ventures. In 2009 for instance, there was a surge in unemployment globally due to global economic meltdown (Ajaegbu, 2012). The World Bank also estimates that 74 million the youth globally, between the ages of 15 and 24 are unemployed which accounts for 41% of all unemployed youth (UN Habitat, 2008 cited Ajaegbu, 2012). In Africa, unemployment frustrations among the youth compelled them to spill out into the streets at the beginning of 2011 which led to the frequent rebellions against the existing political regimes in countries such as Egypt, Libya, Cameron, Syria, Tunisia and Yemen (Herrera & Mayo, 2012). In South Africa, for instance, the overall unemployment rate in 1994 was 22% out of which the youth unemployment rate was 6% and increased dramatically to 25% in 2010 (Jayne, Chamberlin, & Headey, 2014). Additionally, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development Report (2015) indicates that, the youth has been trained in many diverse ways through education, entrepreneurial training and helping countries to improve their economy in order to employ them. This could have helped to reduce unemployment among the youth in order to curtail their involvement in criminal activities. However, their efforts failed to yield positive results since majority of the youth are still not employed for which their situations impel them to involve in illegal activities such as gambling and theft (Gough, Langevang, & Owusu, 2013).

Ghana has a chunk number of youth with enormous potentials which, when harnessed could bring tremendous national development but these youth are confronted with a lot of challenges for which unemployment is not an exception (Yarquah & Baafi-Frimpong, 2012; Yartey & Adjasi, 2007). A Policy like Ghana Youth Employment Agency (GYEA) now Youth Enterprise Agency (YEA) was initiated by the government of Ghana to enable the youth to find more job opportunities in all sectors, especially in areas such as agriculture, education, forestry, resource mobilization and other sectors in the country. Additionally, the government has introduced the Disability Bill to address the employment needs of young persons with disability and the enactment of a demand driven law for Technical and Vocational Education (Sakyiamah-Boahene, 2014). Recently, the government recruited hundred thousand youth for ICT training programme under the YEA. Yet all these efforts proved futile to achieve the targeted goal which has led majority of the youth to be unemployed thereby impelling them to commit crime (Bob-Milliar, 2012). Ironically, Kusi (2015) alludes that what has escalated the situation is the recent embargo placed on employment due to the economic recession of the national economy. Unfortunately, the rise of youth unemployment has led to the recent formation of a group known as an Unemployed Graduates Association of Ghana (UGAG) now Association of Graduates in Skills Development-Ghana (AGSDG), which could serve as a threat to national development. According to Adusei (2012), youth unemployment is coupled with poverty, crime and inequality which could serve as fertile grounds for crime that can lead to social chaos, conflicts and instability that might hamper the development of the country. It is, therefore, not surprising that, a report by the Ghana Prison Service (2012) indicates that majority of the youth are found in the prison cells, some of whom are in jail for misdemeanors and also the Daily Graphic (2015), a national Ghanaian newspaper reported that 170

criminal cases were recorded in the first quarter of 2015 as against 155 criminal cases in the first quarter in 2014 for which the unemployed youth were the main perpetrators.

In the Wa Municipality of the Upper West Region of Ghana for instance which is the focus of this paper, unemployment among the youth has risen to 63% as against the national rate of 48% where many of these youth found themselves engaging in criminality (Asafo, 2015). Peprah (2014) and Dinye and Ahmed (2013) postulate that, 72% of all motor theft cases in the Wa Municipality were perpetrated by the youth posing lots of threats to motor riders, owners and residents. In 2013 for instance, out of 380 stealing cases recorded, 163 cases were motorbikes theft (Asafo, 2015). Available data from the police in the Wa Municipality also indicates that, 90% of all stealing cases are mainly caused by the youth with 80% being unemployed. Boamah, Gyimah, and Nelson (2012), also added that many unemployed youth in the Wa Municipality indulged in delinquencies putting residents unrest. This raises questions in the Municipality such as what are the causes of youth idling and what are its socio-economic implications in the Wa municipality. This paper therefore examines the causes and implications of youth idling in the Wa municipality of the Upper West Region of Ghana.

2. Theoretical bases and issues

Relative deprivation theory and theory of anomie guided this paper. According to Ted Gurr (2015), the rise of expectations and the consequential disappointment in a given society trigger violent crime. Gurr (2015) defines relative deprivation theory as a perceived discrepancy between men's value expectations and their value capabilities. He emphasised that value of expectations are the goods and conditions of life to which people believe and are rightfully entitled to. He further explains that the individual perception of these value potentials and their inability to reach certain values intensifies their deprivations which are determined by the height of their willing expectations. The theory of Gurr which was first published in 1970 envisaged that there is a discrepancy between what people think they deserve and what they actually think they can get and these compel other individuals to resort to violent crimes in the community.

In his book titled "why men rebel" published in 1970 emphatically stated clearly that out of the process of high expectations in society emerge crime and violent conflicts that arise from the disappointment of the people's inability to fulfill their aspirations or expectations. The rationale of this theory encompasses the personal disappointment and angers of those individuals who feel that after an expectation has proven to be unsubstantial it can be translated to violence crime. Thus, yearning for jobs, better infrastructure, high incomes and poverty reduction but could not access any of these could induce individual to commit violent crime. Ajaegbu (2012) and Onwuka et al. (2015) attest to the fact that, there is a specific influence on the rising of youth unemployment on crime. Though the theory has been criticised for the reason that disappointment, frustrations and deprivation only cannot cause violence crime but the strength of the theory outweighs its weakness since unemployment among the youth coerces them to commit crime. This theory is complemented by the theory of anomie to still explain the relationship between lack of jobs and crime in the society.

The theory of anomie was earlier propounded by Emile Durkheim who was one of the founding fathers of modern sociology. Durkheim (2014) defines Theory of Anomie from sociological perspective as “an environmental state where society fails to exercise adequate regulation or constraint over the goals and desires of its individual members”. Durkheim’s book entitled “The rules of sociological perspective published in 1897 stresses that, every society has what he called social facts that exert powerful instruments in the individual’s life. To him, the individuals’ failure to conform to social norms or rules makes the person to become criminal in the society. Merton (1958) cited in Calhoun (2010) confirmed the fact that, social structure exerts a definite pressure upon certain persons in society to engage in non-conforming rather than conforming conduct.

Merton further explains that, there are discrepancies between the means of achieving cultural goals and socially structured capacities of the members in society. He further maintained that, when this anomie occurs, the inability of the individual to achieve these goals through the available approved means of the social system influences the individual to indulge in delinquency or crime. This paper adopts innovation as one of the clear expedient ways of an individual to commit crime. According to Merton, when the individual finds it difficult in achieving the societal goals expected, the he or she innovates some illegitimate ways in achieving the goals outline by the society. In the same vein, if the youth completed education and finds it difficult getting job to satisfy the societal needs. They innovate illegitimate means to commit crime for survival. Similarly, if youth unemployment in the Wa Municipality has increased to 63% against the national rate of 48%, majority of the youth will innovate illegal ways of achieving satisfying their societal goals. Therefore, it is not surprising that majority of the unemployed frustrated youth are involved in criminal activities which is detrimental to the society. This could be the reason for which Peprah (2014) and Dinye and Ahmed (2013) reported that 72% of the unemployed youth are involved in motor theft cases in the Wa Municipality of the Upper West Region of Ghana.

3. Methodology

The study was conducted in the Wa Municipality of the Upper West Region of Ghana. The Wa Municipality shares administrative boundaries with Nadowli District to the North, Wa East District to the east and to the west and the southern Wa- West District. It lies within latitudes 1°40’N to 2°45’N and longitudes 9°32’W to 10°20’W. The population of Wa Municipal by the 2010 Population and Housing Census indicates that, the population of the Municipality is 107,214 representing 15.3% of the region’s total population (Ghana Statistical Service, 2013). The Municipality is dominated with (58%) youthful population of which 35% of the population are below 15 years depicting a broad based population pyramid which tapers off with a small number of elderly persons (60 years and older) representing 6.2%.

Cross-sectional design even though associated with quantitative study was used and triangulated with qualitative data. This design according to Bryman (2016) allows the researchers to collect data at a single point in time. It also permits the researcher to use research instruments such as questionnaires and an interview guides to collect data at once from the respondents without intervals as also noted by Faryorse

(2010) cited in Alhassan (2013). The targeted population were youth inmates, youth outside the group, prison officers and the police. Traditional youth leaders (elders), the assemblymen and youth outside (groups) in the selected communities.

The sample size was 159 and this was determined using Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table. The youth inmates in tandem and the youth outside group were 85 and 74 respectively. It was very imperative using simple random sampling because it gave the individuals equal chances of being selected or excluded as posits by (Kumekpor, 2002, p. 141). This gave the youth inmates and youth outside the opportunity to share their sentiments on the causes of youth unemployment and investigate its implications on the municipality as well as the individual since some youth particularly the inmates were crime perpetrators in the Wa Municipality. The selection of the respondents using simple random sampling helped the researcher's to eschew any form of biases thereby giving a fairly representative sample for the study.

Purposive sampling was used for key informants who have requisite knowledge on the subject under investigation. According to Babbie (2014), non-probability sampling is any technique in which samples are selected in some way not suggested by probability theory. Per this emphasis by the author, the researcher purposively selected 5 traditional youth leaders (elders) and 3 assemblymen from the selected communities in the Municipality. In addition, 6 security officers such as the Police and the Prison (three each) were selected from each institution for in-depth interviews. Also, 10 experienced unemployed youth (5 inmates and 5 youth outside) were selected. The selection was based on a criteria of someone who had experience of at least three years and are knowledgeable about the topic under study. At the community level, three communities, Danko, Dobile and Kpaguri were purposively selected via purposive criteria out of seven communities noted to be crime prone areas (hot spot areas) according to the police description.

Both primary and secondary data were used. The primary data were collected from the youth inmates and the youth outside through questionnaire for the quantitative data whiles the other primary data were collected from respondents such as the security officers like the police and prison, the traditional youth leaders, assemblymen and the experienced unemployed youth through interview guide. This helped the researchers to collect data on the causes of youth unemployment and its implications. The secondary data were gathered from archives, government documents, text books, articles and journals. This helped the researchers to vividly conceptualise concepts such as unemployment, youth, causes and implications.

Method such as in-depth interviews was used to elicit impregnable and proper information on issues related to the study from the assemblymen, the traditional youth leaders, security service officers and experienced unemployed youth. These interviewees were presumed to have knowledge and relevant information on the subject under investigation. The interviews were in the form of a normal interactions and discussions between the researchers and the respondents with the intention of collecting concrete data. This affirms Seidman (2013) postulation that in-depth interview is a form of conversation with the aim of obtaining data. The method was guided by interview guide.

Questionnaires were used to elicit information from the respondents without any fear or intimidation using both open-ended and close ended questionnaires. This agrees with the assumption by Nkansah-Amankra et al. (2012) that questionnaires are divided into two, thus the open-ended and close-ended

questionnaires which give quantifiable data. The researchers used closed-ended questionnaires where options of answers were suggested by researchers to the youth respondents to choose from. However, respondents who were not willing to answer the questions were allowed to decline. The close-ended questions included the age, sex, marital status and occupation of the respondents. In addition, open-ended questions were used to elicit information from the youth prisoner's and the youth outside. The questionnaires were in three thematic areas comprising; the demography of the respondents, the causes of youth unemployment and the implications of the youth unemployment on Wa Municipality.

The responses from the questionnaires were meticulously edited, coded to ensure that they were in liaison with the purpose of the study and scrutinized for errors, omissions and clarify ambiguous errors. Ideas and concepts were categorised using constant comparative analysis where emerging issues were grouped into like themes and unlike themes. The quantitative data were coded, edited and fed into a computer where descriptive statistics such as frequencies, charts and percentages were processed using Statistical Product for Service Solution (SPSS, version 21). The study was not without challenges. The difficulty in getting in touch with the youth in the Wa prisons was a major task and the police agreeing to respond to the questions. Most of the inmates after getting access to them were not in the positions to speak and those who spoke attempted concealing the information needed from them. Also the concentration of the study in the Wa municipality did not give much room for inclusion of the idled youth in the nearby communities. This would have enriched the information needed for the study. In spite of all these challenges, relevant information was acquired and analyses were done successfully.

4. Findings and discussions

This section of the paper provides issues related to the causes of unemployment from the unemployed youth and the employed youth. It further examined the socio-economic implications of unemployment in the Wa Municipality. More importantly the issues relevant to the acquisition of training skills.

Table 1. Economic status of respondents

Categories of Respondents	Frequency	Percent (%)
Public worker	7	4
Private worker	6	4
Self-employed	27	17
Unemployment	119	75
Total	159	100

The study showed in table 1 that, 4% of the total respondents are working in the public sector, thus they are civil or public servants, 4% are working in the private sector and 17% are self-employed. It was revealed during interviews that many of them are farmers while others reported they are into petty trading and others are motor mechanics. Aside the 25% of the total number of respondents employed, 75% said they were unemployed. Therefore, it can be inferred from table 1 that majority of the youth are unemployed. The assemblymen and the elders of the selected communities also disclosed that many of the youngsters are unemployed, of whom many depend on them for their livelihood. In addition, it was found during in-depth interviews that majority of the respondents who claimed to be self-employed earn money which is very meagre and barely provided for themselves and their families and this has rendered them unemployed. The study further revealed that, 65% of the youth who are unemployed are within the ages of 18-29 of which many of whom are found in the prison cells. Therefore, this confirms Alhassan et al. (2016) assertions that, 60% of the youth ages between 15 and 24 are unemployed and many of whom are found in the prison cell in the urban areas of Ghana.

4.1. Job satisfaction

The respondents were interrogated to get a deeper understanding of job satisfaction. This was to enable the researcher to ascertain whether the youth who are employed are satisfied with the work or not. The responses indicates that 56% of the respondents affirmed that they were satisfied with the job they do while 44% expressed dissatisfaction with their works. Fifty six percent who are satisfied with their work were mainly those working in the public sector. Few others are from the private sector such as NGOs and clinics and others are self-employed.

Those who are not satisfied with their work were those who are self-employed and these were mainly mechanics, peasant farmers, farm labourers and casual workers. They explained that employers who give them construction and farm work refused to pay them after the work is done. They further disclosed that some employers ran away without giving them a penny for the work done. This poses lots of difficulties for them making it difficult to fend for their families. The casual construction workers among the youth explained that the money they earn from the construction work is inadequate to cater for themselves and their families. When contractors give them construction work they delayed in the payment of the money and this makes it difficult for them to earn a living. They further said that sometimes it is better to steal for survival than to face frustrations in the work. This was part of their idling in the Wa municipality and some imprisonment as a result of this.

A labourer expressed dissatisfaction with his work during an interview. The farm labourer had this to say:

"When farmers employed me to mount yam for them, they refuse to pay the money after the completion of the work. Some of them also pay it bit by bit and refuse to pay the remaining amount and some even don't pay it at all and they will be playing hide and seek with me. Some also play "go and come" business with me without paying the money. In fact, this is very disheartening making it difficult for me to provide for my family" (December, 2016).

An inmate who was interviewed also said:

"I was a farmer before my sentenced and the reason for being here was that, I was finding it difficult to feed my family especially during the dry season. In addition to that, my wife delivered and the little farm crops I had preserved in my farm to supplement my family needs were stolen by thieves. Based on this unexpected behaviour by the thieves, I was unhappy for becoming a farmer and I was looking for better job to do in order to escape such frustrations. Since I was unable to get the job and the thieves were persistently disturbing me on the farm, I decided to steal a goat to sell in order to get money for my family to survive in the dry season but unfortunately for me, I was caught in the process." (December, 2016).

These statements were confirmed in an interview with an elderly person who is a chief farmer in one of the communities. He had to say this:

"We hardly sow crops in the dry season since we have no irrigation dam in this community and our farm crops and livestock are always stolen by thieves. In 2015 for instance, some thieves came with a nyaaba lorry to pack all my livestock from my pens at night and fled without us getting a glance of them. The food I preserved is always stolen by these unemployed area boys sniffing for any smell of food at every corner in this community especially in the dry season. I am discouraged in furtherance of this work, especially on rearing the livestock due to that bitter experience I had" (January, 2017).

These statements indicated that, though some of the youth are working but they are unhappy with their work due to frustrations they are going through and this made them to idle without being employed and caused them to involve in stealing which eventually lands them into prisons. It was not surprising then that the peasant farm labourer explicated that he wanted to commit a crime to supplement his family needs when he was facing such frustrations with people he had worked for. This meant that if his frustrations prolonged there was the probability of joining the other youth already in the prison cells for stealing livestock. In consequence, it was revealed in an interview that, even with those who claim to be self-employed they do not recognize their work as employment and they are eagerly looking forward to getting other jobs to do. A peasant farmer disclosed in an interview that his work is inadequate in providing the basic needs for his family. He disclosed that because farming was seasonal he was able to provide sufficient food for his family in the rainy season but finds it difficult to provide for them in the dry season since his farm was not close to any dam to be used for irrigating the farm.

4.2. Kinds of Job the unemployed youth are looking for

Questions were asked about the kind of jobs the youth look for to be employed in order to determine the attitude of the unemployed youth towards a particular job which culminated in their unemployment status. Table 2 indicates the various jobs the youth mentioned.

Table 2. Job unemployed youth look for

Categories of Response	Job preference of the unemployed youth	
	Frequency	Percent (%)
White Collar Job	33	28.0
Small Business Enterprising	51	43
Craft Works	17	14
Agriculture	13	11
Others	5	4
Total	119	100

Table 2 reveals that, 28% of the total respondents indicated that they sought or are seeking white collar jobs which implies an office work and teaching whiles the blue-collar jobs encompassed the fieldwork such as small businesses enterprising, craft works and agriculture in the study. In addition, 43% of the total respondents indicated that, they are interested in getting into entrepreneurship to do small business enterprising which implies those who were interested in petty trading such as selling of motor spare parts, doing mobile money among others, 14% of the respondents indicated that, they wanted to do craft works, 11% of the respondents indicated that, they want to enter agriculture while 4% of the respondents reported are others, which entails drivers, carpenters and welders. From table 2 it can be inferred that, majority of the respondents reported to enter into small business enterprises. Therefore, this refutes Johnston-Goodstar and Schucher (2014), Bowles and Gintis (2011) assertions that the youth are unemployed because they despise blue-collar jobs which are far more abundant to them than any other job. Instead, they look forward to white-collar jobs due to the promise of high remuneration.

Youth who had wanted to enter small business enterprises such as petty trading were unable to start the businesses due to financial constraints making them to idle in the Municipality. One of the young prison inmates disclosed that, he looked for money to start a mobile money business, but he was stuck in the process because he was told to deposit an amount of GH¢ 1000 to enable him start the business which amount he could not raise. He further reiterated that, he tried looking for a loan, but all efforts proved futile and this caused him to commit a crime, hence his imprisonment. Another female respondent lamented that she had completed vocational training school and specialized in clothing and textiles. The respondent further asserted that she has looked for money for years to enable her purchase the materials to start the business but all efforts made were fruitless making her to be unemployed.

The youth were interested in starting some entrepreneurship business without necessarily waiting for someone to employ them, but their efforts failed due to their inability to raise the needed capital for the business. Therefore, in this study it was revealed that, the youth in the Municipality do not despise blue collar jobs as surmised by some authors, but rather they are really yearning for the work but they were financially handicapped which has caused them to be unemployed. Respondents also disclosed that they were looking for money to start craft work and this implies weaving of chairs including, baskets and mats. According to the

respondents, craft works are not financially rewarding since customers rarely buy the product. To them, engaging in craft works is tantamount to a state of being idle without job.

This confirms an assumption by Salami (2013) that, the youth are unemployed because they disregard the craftsmen as people who are permanently at the bottom of the socioeconomic ladder. Taking agriculture into cognizance, few respondents indicated that they wanted to enter into farming and this affirms postulation by Sarfo-Mensah et al. (2010) that, agriculture could have offered the youth the greatest job opportunities, but most youth are unemployed because they have refused to enter into farming. In probing further asking why the youth are not interested in farming in interviews, the respondents elaborated that agriculture is a backbreaking and financially unrewarding job to do. Additionally, the respondents indicated that they had no money and land to start farming. Few were of the view that they had no interest in farming because getting money from farming is seasonal and earnings from it after investing lots of energies into it, is nothing to write home about.

4.3. Job training received by youth

Receiving job training is a precondition for acquisition of jobs for the youth. Job training enables the youth to develop the requisite skills relevant to the job market demands which could prevent them from changing from job seekers to job creators, thereby relieving government of the burden of unemployment among the youth and other interveners. This helps to prevent the unemployed youth from committing crime since they would develop their skills for the attainment of jobs and money for survival. In order to find out whether the youth have received skills, “Yes” and “No” questions were asked and in response, 85% responded “Yes” indicating that, they have had job training. Added to this, 15% responded “No” indicating that, they have not received any job training. This was to find out whether the youth had no job training at all which might have made them to be idle in the Municipality or they have received job training but it is inadequate. Table 3 below indicates the types of skills training respondents received.

Table 3. Skills Training Received by the Respondents

Categorise of Response	Skills trained by youth respondents	
	Frequency	Percent (%)
ICT	16	12
Mason	20	15.0
Mechanic	56	41.4
Tailoring	7	5.2
Craft works	6	4.4
Electrician	12	9
Others	18	13
Total	135	100

Table 3 shows that, 12% of the respondents have received training in ICT. It was revealed in an interview that, all those who have received ICT training are those who have had formal education, especially those who

have completed SHS and tertiary education. This meant that since many schools especially the SHS have ICT training as a core subject resulted in equipping them with the skills. In addition, 15% of the respondents indicated that, they were masons, 41.4% were mechanics. All the respondents who have received training in mechanics are motorbike mechanics. It was revealed in the conducted interviews that, majority (85%) of the mechanics happened to have completed the training. Few (15%) of the respondents who are mechanics, especially the inmates reported to be apprentices and many of them have had no formal education and this could have caused their involvement in crime. Subsequently, 5.2% of the total respondents have received training in tailoring and few among them were apprentices. Also, 4.4% reported to have had skills training in craft works, 9% were electricians, 13% are others.

Others are those who are into, hairdressing or barbering, drivers and carpenters. This implies that though some respondents indicated in the interviews conducted that they were unable to complete their skills training, majority (80%) of them completed the training for which many of whom looked or are looking forward to raising some money to utilise their skills to start a shop of their own in order to earn money for living, while 20% are still apprentices. This disputes Konietzka and Kreyenfeld (2010) allusion that, the youth are not employed because they do not have vocational training skills to enable them to be employed. With the exception of university graduates many of the youth, especially the basic and the SHS graduates have had vocational training in masonry, mechanics and tailoring among others as indicated in table 3. According to the respondents, the main reason for their inability to utilise the skills acquired is the fact that they lack money to purchase equipment in order to put the skills acquired into use. This prevented them from putting their skills into good use which caused them to idle in the Municipality.

Also, many of those who had completed their training do not want to work under anybody, they always want to become bosses of their own the reason for which they are unemployed and idled around. The self-employed motorbike mechanics in the Municipality explained that they do not want to work under any boss because they suffer oppressions and false accusations of stealing working tools and snatching their customers from them. These attitudes of the masters have made them to be unemployed because they preferred to be unemployed to suffering such oppressions. This meant that since they are not consistently using the skills acquired deprives them of the requisite experience regarding the acquisition of the necessary skills. This again meant that by the time they would have had the opportunity to raise the money to start their own businesses, they would have forgotten of what was learnt during the skills training. This, of course served as a threat to the youth and the society at large.

A mason who worked on contract basis and raised bought tool and these tools were stolen by his own friends. According to him his friend's attitude and behaviour dampened his spirit to work again hence, compelled him to idle without a job.

4.4. What inspired the youth to skilled trained

The respondents were asked of what inspired them to be trained in the various specific skills. Based on this question, 42% of the respondents indicated that they were inspired to go for the training to enable them attain jobs, 17% reported to have gone for the training in order to develop their skills, 32% claimed to have

been inspired by parents, 9% of the respondents reported that they had passion for the job. It is explained that many of the respondents went for the training so that they can get job in order to enable them earn money for themselves. Accordingly, quite a large number of the respondents went in for the training because their parents influenced their decisions. In addition, it was revealed through the interviews that many of such respondents inherited the skills from their parents either by force or voluntarily. In some instances the parents influenced the decision of the youth to go for the employable skill training against their choices of the kind of job desired, hence they will prefer to idle without jobs.

This refutes allusion by Salami (2013) that parents of the youth believe that the only sure route to success is pursuing a career in the elitist professions such as medicine, law and engineering regardless of whether they have the aptitude, interest or resources. The study discovered that though parents influenced their children's decision, particularly the youth in the acquisition of job training they do not influence them to pursue an elitist professional training as surmised by the author. The study further indicated that parents will want their children to inherit the work they do and these are mostly vocational skills training such as mechanics, electricians, craft works and masons as indicated earlier.

Subsequently, some had the training in order to develop their skills and these respondents who have the desire and passion for the training happened to be those who already have their own work, but using the skills acquired to supplement their works. Others happened to be working with the skills acquired as their main job. Many of the respondents who happened to have gone for the training for want of a job and others who were influenced by their parents reported not to be using the skills acquired and they are seeking to be employed. This was impossible hence such people had to idle in the Municipality without jobs. Those using the skills acquired as their main work reported to be assisted by parents and guardians. Therefore, parents in many cases assisted the youth to channel their energies into productive ventures in order to prevent them from idling which will eventually lead them to criminality.

4.5. Respondents' views on youth unemployment

In order to ascertain the reasons for youth idling in the Municipality respondents were asked about what can lead to unemployment for which they were allowed to give multiple responses pertaining to the question. Figure 1 details the responses:

Figure 1 shows that 30% of the respondents indicated that corruptions on the part of the employers is the topmost pressing of youth unemployment in the Municipality. According to the respondents, some officials of organizations consistently demand for money before offering them jobs. A graduate respondent expressed his view in an in-depth interview that:

"I wrote an application to one of the public Secondary Schools in the municipality, and the headmaster asked me to pay an amount of GH¢ 500 so that he can forward my particulars to Accra for my appointment. Unfortunately, I was unable to raise such amount of money, but a friend of mine who could raise that amount was offered the job the next month" (interview, December, 2016).

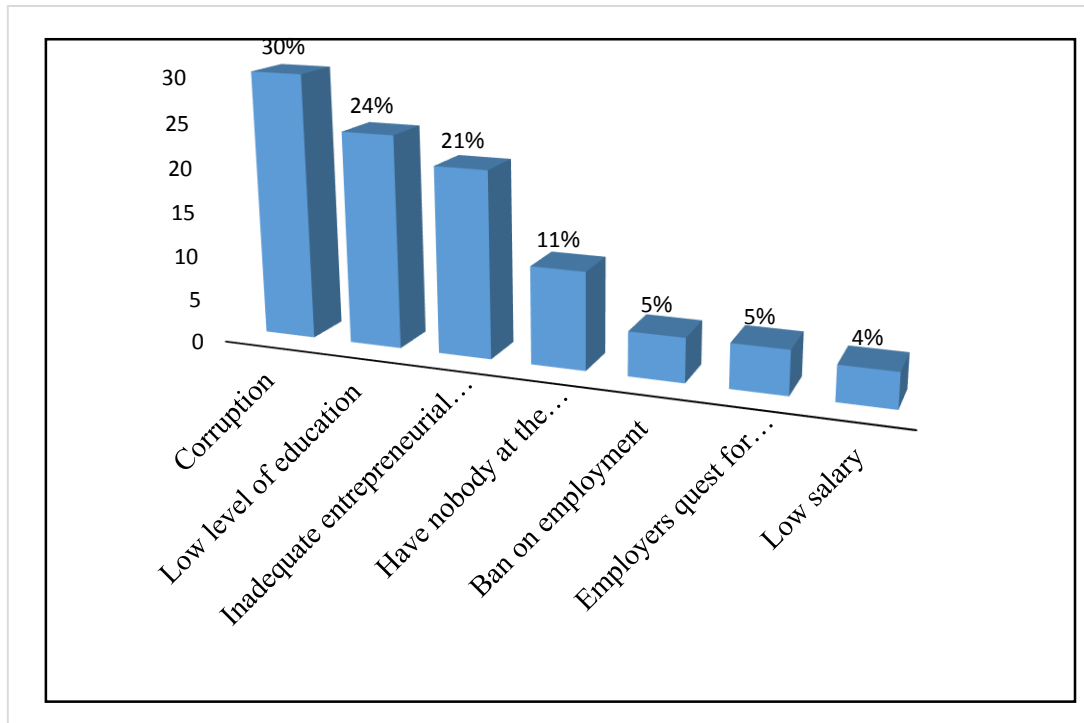


Figure 1. Factors Causing Youth Unemployment (Source: Fieldwork, 2016)

The statement indicates that even though there was a ban placed on recruitment at the time of collecting the data, the respondent believed that if one has money one could influence the employers to get a job. It was discovered in an in-depth interview that, one of the respondents who happened to be a victim of the Police enlistment fraudulent case indicated that he paid GH¢ 3,500 to be enlisted in the Ghana Police Service but unfortunately the discover of the whole incident was blown and it became a fiasco. One of the male respondents also disclosed that he was working with an NGO but his boss was sharing his monthly salary with him for the excuse that he is working on his job ticket, this implies that working in the name of the boss has made him to stop working and preferred to idle since he was not benefiting enough from the job. The employers are taking advantage of them by exploiting them to satisfy their selfish ambition before giving them a job and this has deprived the youth from getting a job and idle in the Municipality.

The unemployed youth further stated that jobs attainment in the Municipality are based on the condition “cash in, cash out” which implies that, pay money for the job and you will certainly get it back when employed. This affirms Okafor (2011) statement that, the causes of youth unemployment are perpetrated by the massive corruption by successive military and civilian administrations which have permeated the entire social structure. Therefore, if pragmatic strides are not taken, there is the likelihood that the youth will devise some dubious ways to get undeserved jobs for themselves which could be detrimental to the society. This meant that, if corruption in the social structure persists without any counter measure as the youth continue to pay before getting jobs they steal from both the public and private coffers when they are

employed in order to balance their costs and this limit the government's efforts to maximize the economic growth of the country.

Low levels of education on the part of the youth have also made them to idle without jobs in the Municipality. The study showed that 24% of the youth, especially the inmates had no or low level of education. One of the inmates expressed the view that:

"I was unemployed because I was unable to complete the education. I completed my education in class two (2) and because of this wherever I go looking for a job. They always tell me that, they could only give me the job if I am able to at least speak and write the English language and this was a hindrance for getting job" (January, 2017).

This statement was affirmed by the Regional Director of Prisons, Wa who said that:

"70% of all the youth perpetrators of crimes in our custody had low levels of education and I believed that is the reason for which they were not employed and they have become crime victims" (Interview, February, 2017).

The elaborations above showed that, the youth especially, the perpetrators of crimes have had low levels of education and according to the respondents, this deprived them from getting jobs and this instigated them to commit crimes. An interview conducted with one of the elders revealed that many of the youth who are involved in criminal activities, especially petty stealing are mainly the youth with low levels of education. This supports an interview conducted with a police officer who explained that 80% of all youth perpetrators of crime in the police cells reported they had low education. Ojo (2012) supported this when the author postulated that low level of education is the main factor causing the youth to be unemployed and which caused them to commit crimes in various forms.

Even though, the government has put pragmatic measures in promoting basic education in Ghana parents, community members, teachers and other stakeholders should endeavour to ensure that the youth are in schools at the appropriate time. This could help to reduce low level of education among the youth and to reduce crime in the society.

Inadequacy in entrepreneurial skills deprive them from getting jobs and idle about in the Municipality. Even though majority of them have been trained in one way or the other the skills are inadequate to get them jobs. An inmate expressed the view that he was trained as a motor mechanic but he was not able to learn it well to be abreast with the skills. The respondents further explained that, even though he was working with the skills acquired, he was finding it difficult to work on certain technicalities.

This stopped customers from bringing their motorbikes for repairs for the fear that he would end up destroying their machines for them and this made him to idle without job and resulted in the prison cells. This view was supported in an interview with a Prison Officer who explained that the youth perpetrators of crime do not have adequate skills to work with and many of them do not take their time to work adequately with the skills learnt and so they would rather play around without concentrating on the job training. The

inmates, were not employed because they do not have adequate skills to earn them jobs. This affirms assertions by Baah-Boateng (2015 Baah-Boateng (2015); Owusu-Ansah, (2012) and Uddin and Uddin (2013) that, the youth has irrelevant skills pertaining to the job markets and this renders many of them unemployable skills. Therefore, the government through the education services in the Municipality and in Ghana at large should develop relevant entrepreneurial skills training curriculum to help train the youth in the various schools in the Municipality.

“Not having anybody or god father at the employment sector” is one of the causes of youth idling in the Municipality without jobs. According to the respondents, getting employment in recent times is swift from the syndrome “whom you know to “who knows you” which implies that employers give employment to their relatives and so if you are not part of their family or relatives it will be very difficult to get the job. According to the youth, even politicians’ give employment to their party members and so if you happen to be one of them there is the probability of obtaining a job. It was observed during the interviews that, the youth who expressed these sentiments had in mind about joining a political party since to them that is the surest way of getting a job. One of the respondents revealed that, having a relative or family member at the topmost hierarchy of the public and private sectors is a sure to get a job without writing an application since your name would be added to the protocol list.

The youth who do not have anybody in the public or the private sectors continued to face this challenge which deprives them from getting employment, they developed some innovative illegal strategic means for living as stressed by the theory of anomie that underpins this study. In furtherance with this, if job opportunities continue to be given to party members or faithful as found out, violent crimes occurring in the Wa Municipality and the country at large would continue. This has the potential to lead to upsurge in criminal activities thereby perpetuating violence especially, before and after election since everybody wants his or her party to win in order to get or retain their jobs.

Fourteen percent (14%) explained that ban on employment, employer’s quest for experience and low salary caused them to idle without jobs. Some of the respondents were denied of jobs because of the embargo placed on employment by the government and this was mostly expressed by the youth in the selected communities. According to them, whenever they write applications for jobs especially in the public sector, the officials tell them to be listening to radio stations and when they hear that the ban on employment in the public sector is lifted they should come for the replies to the application letters. To them it is quite frustrating since many of them idle without jobs. If the ban is not lifted on employment, the number of unemployed youth in the Municipality would double and this would dramatically increase more criminal activities among the youth in the Municipality.

Again, employers turned them down for not having at least five years of experience for the job. During an interview, a male respondents who is a degree holder in accounting indicated that, he has been writing applications for almost four years and wherever he goes, the employers are looking for someone with at least three to five years of experience and this has made him to remain idle without a job to do for four years. This confirms Akaeze (2011) suggestion that the employers’ attitude of insisting on stretching years of experience before giving employment is irrelevant in the sense that if the youth are not given the opportunity to even

start work, how can they gain the experience the employers inquire about. The study further supports the author's assertion that, employers quest for stretching the years of experience by insisting on a minimum of three years is illogical in the sense that where do they expect a 25 year old youngster who has just completed tertiary education to acquire three to five years' of experience. The study further maintain that respondents should be given the opportunity to work as employers train them could be the best way of reducing unemployment among the youth. Few respondents also indicated that, the monthly salary they were gaining was inadequate, which impelled them to stop working. It was revealed in an interview that, among all those who remarked that low salary causes unemployment, particularly among the youth happened to be those who have worked before.

Absence of jobs, especially in the public sector has given upper hand to the private sector employers to exploit them by giving low remuneration which is not commensurate with what they work for and their certificates. In an interview, one of the respondents indicated that he was working with one of the private basic schools in town as a university graduate and he was paid an amount of only GH¢ 200 as his monthly salary. The respondent further disclosed that, when he complained about the payment, the employers told him to either stop complaining or quit the job. The respondent further maintained that, jobs from the private employers is now based on the syndrome "undervalue your certificate and work without complaint. This means that putting away your certificate and working with the minimum amount without any hiss. The study discovered that if these factors prolong it could perpetrate unemployment, especially among the youth which make them commit crime.

4.6. Implications of Youth Idling without Jobs

This discusses the effects of youth idling in the Wa Municipality. Because of many youth idle in the Municipality, the study found that youth are unemployed and many channelled their energies into unproductive ventures which poses lots of threats to the inhabitants of the municipality. The following are the three topmost criminal activities the idle youth engage themselves in. Table 4 below indicate the activities:

Table 4. Type of criminal activities the youth are engaged in

Types of crimes	No. Of Responses
Motor theft	120
Livestock stealing	60
Stealing of electrical appliances	55
Smoking of "wee" Marijuana	50

Table 4 indicates multiple responses. It is clear that motor theft was the topmost crime committed by youth due to unemployment and frustrations. The youth explained that there is quick money in stealing of motorbikes to get money for survival. Stealing of motorbikes especially the "rubber-rubber", a type of motor mostly use by women is very lucrative in the market than the other types and that is the reason for which they prefer to have gone for stealing of motorbikes. The study again found that these motorbikes are sold at a market popularly known as "ready market", a type of market where stolen motorbikes are sold. In an

interview, a respondent disclosed that he stole a motorbike because it is the easiest way to make money. The respondents further disclosed that there are key cutters and rubber changers at the "ready market" who can change both the keys and the rubber fenders. This makes it easier for him to pick motorbikes to sell to earn money for a living. In an interview with a police officer he also agreed that the young culprits dismantle the motorbikes, especially the "rubber-rubber" and throw the number plates and the rubbers away because all these things are sold at the "ready market" such that even when the culprit is apprehended the owner of the motorbike cannot identify the bike. To them, at times they exchange a motorbike engine with another motorbike, thus, exchange a 'Luojia' engine with 'Access' engine, all types of rubber-rubber motorbikes. This makes it difficult for the motor owners to identify their bikes.

The perpetrators earn quick money in motor theft they considered it as a business which is a threat to the society development. The Municipality is gradually turning into a den of motor thieves where no one can guarantee his or her safety. This poses a threat to both motor owners and riders. It is therefore not surprising that a report by the police service 2016 indicates that motor theft is the topmost crime committed in the Wa Municipality which is mostly perpetrated by the idled youth. When respondents were asked about how much a brand new motorbike is sold at the "ready market", they disclosed that a brand new motorbike is sold between GH¢ 300-500 depending on how fast you want the money. This meant that the youth only needed the money to escape unemployment, frustrations and to satisfy their societal goals as indicated by the theory of anomie and the relative deprivation theory that stanch the study. An elder disclosed in an in-depth interview that:

"My children bought me a "rubber-rubber" motorbike which I packed outside my house for the engine to cool down before pushing it to my room but to my total dismayed I heard the sound of the motorbike moving with a rascal young man riding the bike at a very top speed. I was very astonished because I was holding the keys in my palm and I don't know where on earth the thief got the wonderful keys from. I reported the case to the police, but they have not had any traces of the bike till date" (interview, January, 2017).

From the statement, the youth, especially the unemployed delight themselves in stealing motorbikes since it is very easy to do so. The study found that some motor sellers connive with these frustrated idled youth to steal the motorbikes. The study further found that at times when someone buys the bike they secretly cut new keys and give it to the boys to go and steal the bike after which the shop owners take their share in the sale of the stolen bikes. This confirms Dinye and Ahmed (2013) postulations that majority (72%) of the motor theft cases are caused by the unemployed youth. Again, it was evidenced from the explanation that the youth are into such crimes in order to get money for survival. Therefore, this supports an assertions by Hirschi (2015) that, achieving socioeconomic status in the society is inextricably linked to crime. This might mean that idling of youth without jobs posed a lots of threats to residents in the Wa municipality.

This refutes postulations by Fanimu and Olayinka (2009) cited in Ajufo (2013) that the unemployed youth, mostly commit crimes such as militancy violence, kidnapping, restiveness and political instability. The study revealed that the youth in the Wa Municipality is not exemplified by such violent crimes as outlined by the

authors but rather they are mostly into motor thefts. Therefore, this is a gap which has to be adhered to since at times these motor theft crimes are not only crimes against the person's property, but also against the person as well for which death casualties are being recorded. Majority (75%) of the youth who were involved in motor theft cases are those who are motor mechanics or apprentices. This indicates that there is a nexus between unemployed youth perpetrators acquisition of skills and the crime committed. When the youth acquired skills with the aim of getting a job and the expectations fail, they exert their energies on crime regarding their skills. In view of this, the police in the Municipality should endeavour to clearly identify these ready market such as the key cutters and motors shop owners who are aiding the idled youth to commit such crimes. This could help reduce the youth involvement in crime thereby promoting the development of the Municipality.

Consequently, table 4 further showed that livestock stealing is another criminal activity engaged by the idled youth in the Municipality. In an interview with some of the respondents the idled youth preferred livestock stealing to a perpetual life of unemployment. To them livestock stealing could earn them some money for a living instead of depending on their parents and guardians. When this livestock is stolen from the farmers they sell it to those who are in the livestock business and the butchers. An elder from one of the communities confirmed that, goats and sheep are always stolen by the youth especially on the eve of market days. The elder further stated that the youth steal the goats by sealing their mouths with cello-tape and bolt with them. The youth do not even consider this type of stealing as a crime because to them it is a way of sustaining their life till the time they will get jobs. The perpetrators always have somebody to sell the livestock to at very affordable prices and this makes it easier for them to steal. Some youth inmates who were involved in sheep and goat stealing explained that selling livestock is very easy because you do not need any document to prove the ownership when selling to the customers. Only few individuals asked about where they got it from, others do not ask at all since it is always much cheaper than the prevailing market prices so they hurriedly buy without questioning the source. This has dwindled the efforts on farmers who rear livestock.

Stealing of electrical appliances were another criminal activity the idled youth were into. These comprises stealing of computers, televisions, decoders, sound systems among others. The respondents expressed that they stole electrical appliances in order to aid them with some money for a living. In many cases as the paper unravel some of the idled youth engage in smoking "wee" a herb which is illegal to be smoked in Ghana. The study further disclosed that 70% of all youth involved in such crimes are those who have acquired skills or little skills in repairing these appliances and because of financial constraints they are not utilizing the skills and idle without jobs in the Municipality. An elderly man had this to say:

"I asked one of the area boys who have been trained in repairing televisions to fix a flat screen television in my room. He came to fix it alright, but in the following week when I returned from work I realized that my room had been invaded and amazingly the brand new flat screen television had been stolen. I asked the repairer about the flat screen, but he told me he has not seen it; unfortunately for him some neighbours saw him with a flat screen television. Upon thorough investigation, we realized that he had sold the flat screen television to another person

for money with the excuse that he needed money to buy some working tools for use” (interview, 2016).

It was deduced from the statement that many of the youth are stealing electrical appliances for want of money to start their own businesses. An interview with a police officer confirmed that stealing of computers and flat screen televisions sets have now become a norm among the idled youth in the Municipality. Electrical appliance cases are always reported to them almost every weekend. According to the Police Officer, not long ago a school's computer laboratory was invaded and a number of computers and accessories were taken. The Police Officer further maintained that all these are mostly committed by the youth who are not working. To the police officer such crimes are mostly committed during weekends. As noted by Groenqvist (2011). One of the perpetrators of this crime in an in-depth interview explained that he stole a flat screen television to enable him start a video show business since he had searched for jobs for a number of years without any success. This refutes an assumption by Mutarubukwa (2015) that, the jobless and poor youth are mostly engaged in stealing of petrol from broken oil pipelines and overturning oil tankers. This is not the case in the Wa Municipality.

Youth idling without jobs has bred crime perpetrators in the Wa municipality for which motor riders, motor owners and residents are troubled with the fear of their motorbikes or property being snatched from them. Residents in the municipality are feared for their lives because these hungry idled youth most at times go to their houses forcefully requesting for the aforementioned items. Impliedly, if one fails to provide one the youth perpetrators end up killing or harming the individual.

5. Conclusion and recommendations

Achieving crime free environment is at the heart of every government and most international bodies. However, in a situation whereby the youth who are the backbone of every country's future economic growth tend not to be working and idle after fruitlessly searching for employment for weeks, months and years, it becomes a security threat to the social and economic development of the country. These idled youth would not earn money for a decent living and pushes many of them into crime just for survival sake. Property are not only stolen in the night but also in a broad day light as well and this endanger the lives of the inhabitants of the Wa Municipality. Additionally, eighty five percent (85%) of all crime perpetrators are the unemployed youth for which many of whom find themselves imprisoned in Wa Municipality. In cognizance with this, the following recommendations are made to abate the menace.

- Inadequate entrepreneurial skills training among the unemployed is one of the causes of youth unemployment. Therefore, the government of Ghana through the Ministry of Education should endeavour to integrate entrepreneurial skills training in the school curriculum by making it a core subject for basic education through to tertiary education level. Vocational and Technical schools should be upgraded with the necessary equipment by the government to enable the youth to gain employable skills to become job creators rather than job seekers. NGOs should endeavour to channel resources into youth empowerment through skills training. These could help the youth to be

equipped with the relevant skills related to the job market demands by enabling the youth to attain jobs and become job creators. Also, the Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations should endeavour to put forth productive stringent measures to reduce the number of protocol list of politicians and public officials that perpetrate youth unemployment. This could help to open up more job opportunities for all the youth, which would help to drastically reduce youth unemployment and to avert their involvement in crime.

- The vocational skills trainers from the communities, particularly those on whom the youth work under their auspices after training should endeavour to fairly treat and pay the youth so as to enable them to serve for some period of time to aid them with money for a living. The minimum wage policy should be reviewed, monitored and supervised by the government to enable all employers to pay employees in consonance with the policy, thereby preventing employers or trainers from massive exploitation which makes the youth to be unemployed.
- Embarking on a vigorous campaign by the Ghana Police Service to educate the general public, especially motor store owners and key cutters to desist from conniving with the youth to commit crime. This will reduce the youth involvement in crime.
- Severe and fair punishment should be meted out by the Judicial Service to crime promoters such as owners of motor spare parts shops and key cutters who are involved in promoting motor theft. Also, the youth exemplified by motor theft, stealing of electrical appliances and livestock should be given equal punishment as the crime promoters. This could serve as a deterrent to the other youth who intend to commit such crimes for survival.
- Finally, the government should develop a conscious economic policy to rekindle growth and expansion in the private sector. This will provide more employment opportunities for the youth, thereby reducing their involvement in crime.

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